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Young Women's Christian
Association of the U.S.A.

Report of the secretary of
the War Work Council

New York

[1918]

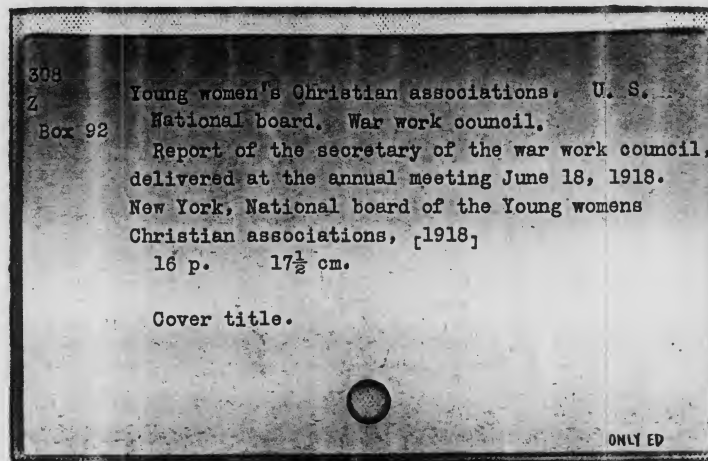
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Report of the Secretary of the *B...* War Work Council

Delivered at the Annual Meeting
June 18, 1918



National Board of the
Young Womens Christian Associations.
600 Lexington Ave., New York

PREFACE

At the time this country faced the possibility of war, the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations was confronted with a great responsibility for helping to safeguard the moral condition of women and girls as affected by war conditions.

The organization which in times of peace and under ordinary circumstances is able to carry out a program is naturally the one to which the community may turn in time of emergency. The Young Women's Christian Association has the machinery, the equipment and the motive to make this work effective.

Request came from the United States War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities and from the Young Men's Christian Association, for women workers to undertake work among girls in communities adjacent to army and navy training camps.

The War Work Council was organized June sixth and seventh, nineteen hundred seventeen, with a membership of one hundred women chosen from the Association membership and from prominent leaders in many states who had not hitherto been associated with the Y. W. C. A.

The function of the War Work Council is to act as a committee of the National Board responsible for using the resources of the Young Women's Christian Association in helping meet the special needs of girls and young women of all countries affected by the war.

JUNIOR WAR WORK COUNCIL AND GIRLS' WORK.

The Junior War Work Council will hold its own conference on June nineteenth. This Council is organized as a channel to furnish younger leadership, speakers for the Speakers' Bureau in Fields through training courses, and in some places by means of helping to gather vocational exhibits.

Two conferences will be held on the western coast, the San Francisco conference in July is a two day session.

The program decided upon for the nineteenth, to be carried out by the Junior War Work Council, will include a Recreational Program, particularly pageantry such as Miss Hazel MacKaye is planning.

The Patriotic League is expanding rapidly, the members now number four hundred and ten thousand, nearly one half million. It is a big unifying measure for the young girls in our land. It unifies various lines of girls' work promoted by communities in four hundred and twenty-one cities and towns, and one hundred and forty-five student centers.

The head of the Physical Education Department at the University of Wisconsin said: "We never promoted any plan for girls' work that succeeded as does this Patriotic League. It must have been a genius who thought of it."

It is impossible to estimate the amount of Service Work accomplished by the League. This includes work for the Red Cross, the Navy League, the Belgian Relief and French Orphans. For example, a unit of twenty-five girls made twenty-seven sweaters and ten baby kits.

The Patriotic League in Washington, D. C., helped investigate living places for ten thousand girls for the Rooming Directory.

Because the membership is largely of younger girls, three extra headquarters traveling secretaries, and five field staff secretaries, one secretary among colored girls and one special worker for young girls in the Foreign-Born Division are to be put on.

The demand for trained leaders for the "teen" age will be met by the Geneva Conference June twenty-first. The applications already number two hundred and fifty. Since we can accommodate only sixty, we are arranging to meet the need otherwise.

The program of girls' work must be adjusted to each different community. It falls into the following general divisions:

1. Recreation planned for girls, and also for girls and men. The work of Miss Geister in Charleston, S. C. and the work in Washington, D. C., illustrates what can be accomplished.

2. Group work needing careful leadership in less formal recreation and games. It includes organized play, dramatic work and story telling.

3. Constructive organized club work. This develops definite responsibility and initiative through Girl Scout Work and through Hostess Clubs. This is especially important near camps. Three kinds of clubs are planned for different ages. The "Rainbow" Clubs are for grade and junior high school girls; "Be Square" Clubs for young employed girls; "Friendship" Clubs are for high school girls.

4. Pressure upon girls to leave school for work, necessitates training and education. The Y. W. C. A. aids in Vocational Guidance Program. Pamphlets on this subject are available.

5. All these groups are correlated and unified through the Patriotic League in the community.

INDUSTRIAL WAR WORK.

Women are awake to the fact that we must follow two armies—an army of men and an army of women. Men sometimes forget the "woman's army" in war work is now two million strong.

The Y. W. C. A. must develop regular work so as to give adequate support to this Industrial War Work. Two forms of leadership are needed.

1. Leadership for developing morale among the women workers.

2. Leadership for social protective movements.

Public opinion must be molded to promote—

1. Eight-hour day.
2. One day's rest in seven.
3. Minimum wage.
4. Equal pay for equal work.
5. Health and moral hazard to workers.
6. Abolition of night work for women.
7. Place of women on labor's program.
8. Collective bargaining as expressed in Trade Unionism.
9. Our social responsibility for education and legislation.

Because the Government has production in the forefront, no appropriation has been made for the program to stabilize newer working conditions, and the Government has turned to the Y. W. C. A. to co-operate in putting on our program, which includes "Industrial War Service Centers" similar to Hostess Houses in the camps. The activities of these centers will include information desks, directories, employment bureaus, rest rooms, recreation centers, cafeterias and girls' activities, military drills in companies, patriotic service activities, standardized community recreation, social morality lectures and rest period recreation. All this is war service work.

Requests by the Government or from the managers of plants doing government work have come from twenty-five centers representing one hundred thousand women. Yet this is only one-third of the present "war order" munition industries.

Co-operation with the Employer. Pressed by the necessity for maximum production, the problems growing out of the employment of women, (such as housing, feeding, and recreation) are grave, for they largely determine the character of work done and the labor turned out.

Employer. We can help the employer: first, *through our community program*; and second, through our *Bureau for Industrial Supervision* and the training of women for such supervisory positions.

This training will be given at Bryn Mawr College by Dr. Susan Kingsbury of the Department of Social Economy in our eight months' *course for industrial supervisors—welfare and employment managers*. The Young Women's Christian

Association, through its War Work Council is helping to finance this course. Following the decision of the Y. W. C. A. Council to co-operate with Bryn Mawr, the following telegram was received:

May 14, 1918.

Miss Florence Simms,

Secretary of Industrial Work,

Young Women's Christian Association, New York.

Have just had opportunity of learning from Dr. Kingsbury proposed war emergency industrial courses in Bryn Mawr. I desire to say plan which is contemplated is most essential to provide trained workers if the industrial activities of war days and beyond are to be wisely guided. If the work is undertaken it will be carried on in fullest co-operation with the Labor Administration "O. K." and to meet some of its needs.

FELIX FRANKFURTER

Assistant to Secretary of War.

The Training of Workers. Leadership with the right knowledge of industrial problems as well as of the girl herself plus training and ability to promote "our program" must be provided.

Training courses include both lecture work and practical experience and are being conducted in four local Associations. Special courses will be given at four industrial councils, and a six months' course, beginning July fifth, will be held at the National Training School this summer.

The Survey of Munition Plant Centers. Investigation of each plant and community will be made as soon as possible after the request for work has been received.

This Survey will include the questions of housing, employment, day and night shifts, community recreation, transportation and all other phases that affect the life of the girls.

COLORED GIRLS' WORK.

To protect the colored girl in war time and *help the women of the men in service* is a task of the Department of Work Among Colored Women. We encourage them to avail themselves of the industrial positions now open to them. Stress is laid upon social morality talks and upon the equal opportunities now offered to colored girls which were never open before. The mutual understanding between white women and colored women is growing rapidly throughout the land.

WAR WORK AMONG COLORED GIRLS AND WOMEN

Owing to war conditions the work with colored women is being greatly extended and two hundred thousand dollars of the five-million-dollar budget of the National War Work Council of the Young Women's Christian Association is devoted exclusively to this work. This money is being used to provide the staffs for Hostess Houses, which accommodate the families of colored troops; for emergency housing for colored girls in war industrial centers where there is no local Y. W. C. A.; to furnish field workers for investigation, and leaders of the best type among colored women. To encourage women to show what they can do in war work in filling the hundreds of industrial positions now at their disposal.

There are Colored Hostess Houses at Camp Upton, and at Camp Dix. Others are being erected at Camps Jackson, Dodge, Sherman, Gordon, Funston, Grant and Meade. The Camp Upton Hostess House is the training center for workers who will be sent to the other camps as soon as houses are ready. All winter barracks were used at Camp Upton, but now the new house is being used and a most enjoyable and successful formal opening was held on April twentieth.

Great stress is being laid on social morality talks, and through these talks thousands of girls are being reached in every section of the country. The War Work Council aims to do everything for the colored girls that is being done for the white girls. Equality of opportunity and mutual understanding are the two essentials in the colored girl's development and in her freedom to make the best contribution to the community. The equality of opportunity has come now with the war, with the scarcity of men and with the decrease in immigration; and the mutual understanding is now rapidly increasing.

Houston, Texas.

Besides Patriotic Service Leagues and classes in food demonstration, table service and wartime cookery, there is a Rainbow Club, French class, library classes, a class in stenography and a Tennis Club. On Sundays the doors of the center are opened for a cozy "Quiet Hour."

Columbia, South Carolina.

Activities are being carried on through nine clubs which have been organized and which have an enrolment of one hundred and ninety-five girls.

Washington, D. C.

Washington presents a unique situation among all the cities. It is the capital and therefore the center of all war activity. The proximity of Camp Meade brings its own problems. The War Work Council is planning to demonstrate to the country

an adequate work for girls. Two of the chief problems are adequate housing and recreational facilities.

Little Rock, Arkansas.

The colored people themselves have made a start to raise money to carry on the work. In a recent campaign their aim was to raise two thousand dollars, but they went "over the top" by six hundred dollars. Thirty-eight organized Patriotic Service Clubs among school girls and seven among employed girls have a total membership of nine hundred.

Richmond, Virginia.

Within the last two months eleven clubs with a membership of two hundred and thirty-three girls have been actively engaged. The people of Richmond have shown an especial interest in the social morality lectures. Several of these lectures have been given at the mothers' meetings, where there was an average attendance of two hundred and fifty.

Charlotte, North Carolina.

The work of the branch Association in this city has been extended to reach a greater number of girls.

Atlanta, Georgia.

We are facing an acute situation at Atlanta and two workers are already on the field to meet it. Within the last two months eighteen Patriotic Service Leagues have been organized with a membership of four hundred and seventy-three.

Camp Dix Vicinity.

One of the most interesting phases of the work that we are taking up at this time is community work in Burlington County, in which Camp Dix is situated. A worker is already there and will probably organize county work.

Louisville, Kentucky.

There are already two thousand girls employed in different factories there. The work for these girls includes provision for recreation, housing and protection.

Petersburg, Virginia.

That the girls of Petersburg appreciate their recreational center is shown by the report of the worker that there has been an attendance of six hundred and five girls.

Greater New York.

We think of Greater New York as a big bustling city, but here too the girls have felt the call for service and are in accord with the highest and noblest ideals of these thrilling times. This has been demonstrated by the eager volunteer service on the part of college and training school girls in both Brooklyn and Harlem. These girls will soon have an opportunity to render valuable service in the recreation centers to be opened by July first.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ORGANIZATION AND EXTENSION OF REGULAR WORK.

One hundred and forty-five (145) workers have been sent out to eighty-three (83) centers during the past year. As the summer comes on, there is an increasing demand for recreation leaders, particularly for the beaches and summer resorts that are near camps. This means not only workers, but also renting and equipping the centers where the work can be done. The most outstanding piece of work begun by this committee during the past month is the building of a club house for the girls working on the Amusement Zone outside Camp Lewis. This work is very like that done by the Association on the Zone at the Panama Pacific Exposition.

LETTER FROM GENERAL GREEN TO MISS CLARK

Camp Lewis

Headquarters 91st Division
American Lake, Washington

June 10, 1918

Miss Constance Clark, Superintendent
YWCA Hostess House, Camp Lewis, Wash.

My dear Miss Clark:

Permit me to confirm in writing what I have already told you in personal conversation, that I do most heartily approve the proposition to establish a YWCA Hostess House in the extra-cantonment amusement zone known as "Greene Park."

In my opinion there is a large field for useful work there by your organization among the considerable number of young women who will be regularly employed by the several concessionaires, as well as among the transient visitors.

I am so impressed with the great work of the Camp Hostess House under your able management that I unqualifiedly recommend its extension to a branch house at Greene Park under the same management. I know this will add very much to your labors, but I am satisfied that with a reasonable addition to your efficient, loyal and zealous corps of assistants, you will accomplish it with credit to yourselves and with profit to those who will come under your care.

This letter is written primarily for your own information; but secondarily for the enlightenment of any "Whom it may concern" and to accomplish the latter object you are authorized to make such use of it as you choose.

My dear lady, I don't suppose I could ever make you or any one else understand how much of care and responsibility in the looking after the thousands of visiting relatives of the men of this command your wonderful Hostess House has relieved me of; but I take this occasion to assure you that the amount is very great, that I appreciate very much the work along those lines of the YWCA, of yourself, and all of your assistants, and that I am very grateful.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) H. A. GREEN
Major General, N.A.
Commanding

HAG:E

HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Housing Committee is glad to report that the house at Ayer, Mass., is open, and in spite of the many difficulties in getting labor and materials, the Charleston building is coming on rapidly. Beginning the first of July, the Housing Committee has taken the building of the Confederate College in Charleston to house the girls, while the building at the navy yard is being completed.

By the first of July, or very soon after, the Housing Committee hopes that the two vacation houses at Washington will be open. These houses, which are to be managed by the local Washington Committee can take care of about four hundred girls at one time. Each house is about forty-five minutes' trolley ride from the center of the city.

NOTES ON WORK OF WAR WORK COUNCIL FOR FOREIGN WOMEN.

This is the only undertaking on a national plan which is training and employing women to make a business of working for the education of foreign-born women into American life.

To date there are nineteen important cities with International Institute Information Bureaus and staffs of American and foreign language workers employed and giving all their time to *social service work for foreigners*, which is the key and the basis of all Americanization work. There are six new ones beginning work this month. There are twenty-four trained women employed on the national and district field staff. There are a total to date (June fifteenth) of one hundred and five trained women on the Americanization job. No other agency of any kind has so many doing this kind of work.

The National Americanization Committee has no branches. It works from one office in New York City. Its written pro-

grams, its publicity goes all over the country. Its purpose is to rouse Americans to go to work. It occasionally sends out speakers but has too limited a staff to do so regularly. It *does not train* workers, it *does not supply* workers. It stirs up Chambers of Commerce to organize Americanization Committees but it does not organize or direct what shall be done.

We are frequently called on to organize the work after an Americanization Committee has agitated.

Cleveland has the strongest Mayor's Americanization Committee in the country. The executive of the International Institute is one of the officers of it. All the work for women is done by the International Institute foreign-language workers. The national secretary of Immigration and Foreign Committee work of the National Board was called in to advise in organization and plans of program before it was started.

The Y. M. C. A. works only for men.

The D. A. R.s through state committees, put out educational material but do not themselves enter into the realms of employed social work.

Polish Grey Samaritans have set up groups in eight places to date.

Suffrage state committees have started campaigns to educate foreign women. They ask agencies at work in the communities to carry out their programs. International Institutes in New York and Syracuse and Los Angeles have been asked to take charge of all citizenship work for non-English speaking women. Since steady educational work for citizenship is already a part of program of Institute work, they take it over.

The best state work in the country is that of the California Commission on Immigration and Housing. In their two recent reports on "Teaching English" and "Americanization of Foreign Women," they mention the work of the Y. W. C. A. and at one point say "too much praise cannot be given for the splendid practical work of this organization which has workers who speak the foreign languages of the communities."

The new Immigration Bureau of Massachusetts is the only other state enterprise that has a program approaching the California program. This bureau asked the National Board to find, train and support for them a secretary to organize state work for women. We are giving this secretary two months' training, in which time she is visiting and observing the work of agencies which approach Americanization from the idea of service, education and fair-play for immigrants. She is in California now and will visit the School of Opportunity, Denver; Immigrants' Protective League, Chicago; Americanization Committee, Cleveland; Board of Education, Cincinnati, and International Institutes in several places, such as Pittsburgh, Akron and New York.

In fifteen places Red Cross work for foreigners is done by International Institute workers.

Akron has been asked to take complete charge of new "Communication Service" between countries.

When the S.S. "Carolina" was torpedoed, the International Institute of Brooklyn did all the translation for Spanish speaking passengers.

*Madame Batchkoroova's little sister has been placed in our hands by the Russian Embassy. She will stay at International Institute House in New York until she learns English, and then will be placed at school under our care.

The International Information and Service Bureau is the only foreign language press service, non-commercial, in the United States. It is the only educational press service of any kind of writers who understand our foreign speaking people writing for foreign women. Our staff is constantly translating pertinent facts in terms that can be grasped by the foreign speaking women such as:

Soldiers mail; Money for War Prisoners; Baby Saving Campaign; Status of certain groups of enemy aliens as the Poles from Prussia and Austria-Hungary.

This work is but six months old and has only just begun to touch its field of service.

SOCIAL MORALITY SECTION

The staff of the Social Morality Department has been increased from four to forty-five. Seventy-five lecturers are available. Over thirteen hundred lectures have been given reaching over two hundred thousand people. Every camp and cantonment center has been touched. Yet the work has just begun.

Lectures are given to groups of mothers, teachers, high school girls and business women. Special attention is being paid to industrial centers. In Paterson, where the work has just begun, forty-five factories were opened the first week to the five doctors who went there to lecture.

At the conference in New York City last week over sixty leading physicians came together to work in co-operation with the War Department representatives on a standardized program.

The Y. W. C. A. Lecture Bureau has become the official bureau for the Women's Division of the Social Hygiene Section of the Commission on Training Camp Activities of the War Department, of which Dr. Katherine B. Davis is the head.

We co-operate locally with Community Committees which include Catholics and Jews, as well as all of the Protestant denominations, industrial workers, and other groups.

*Madame Batchkoroova was the leader of the famous Russian women's "Legion of Death."

REPORT OF PUBLICITY COMMITTEE.

The Publicity Committee was organized a year ago under the direction of Mrs. William Adams Brown. It had then one secretary and one stenographer. Today there are fourteen secretaries in the United States and two in France and thirteen stenographers and clerical workers.

We regret that because of her heavy duties as chairman of finance, Mrs. Brown has felt obliged to resign the chairmanship. Mrs. Lewis H. Lapham has been elected in her stead.

There have been thirty-three issues of the WAR WORK BULLETIN, the mailing list having increased from 1,000 in October to 75,000 in June. The total number of BULLETINS printed to date is 857,800.

905,325 leaflets, cards and dodgers, largely educational, have been and are being distributed.

534,000 sheets of stationery have been furnished to Hostess Houses for the free use of guests.

129,500 posters including Hotel Petrograd, Summer Conference, General Hostess House, New York City Hostess House, the Briggs Cartoon, and Land Service posters have been printed and are being distributed.

The Newspaper Section of the Publicity Committee is serving regularly 1,400 papers. This covers every state, every city of any size and with the continued enlargement of the list, is rapidly coming to mean that every county will be adequately covered.

The total circulation of the 1,400 papers, is 38,000,000 readers. 268 stories have been written and 4,989 copies of these stories sent out.

In the last six weeks 1,035 county papers have had stories. Three thousand two hundred and forty photographs have been received; 1,365 photographs have been sent out.

Forty-two showings of lantern slides have been made and seven fields provided with sets of war work slides.

A clipping bureau service has shown that 15,367 articles have been printed.

Two hundred special articles for War Chests and six broadsides of stories of our work are issued.

This report covers the time between January twenty-fifth and June fifteenth only.

The War Work Council has leaped into the magazine world. Last year the Association had only one feature story in a popular magazine. Writers were put to work. By January results began to show. In the first five months of this year there have appeared in general magazines, women's publications and the religious press forty-four leading articles. Ten more are in type in editor's offices. Others are definitely ordered.

Two magazine writers are now employed, working continuously, and their stories are snapped up by editors as fast as they can produce them. There is no waste product from this section.

Material is beginning to come in from France and is being distributed through magazines and newspaper directors.

A recent canvass of the editorial staff reveals individual editorial experience ranging from one and a half years to twenty-two years and a collective experience of sixty-two years of magazines and newspaper writing, all of which is at the service of the War Work Council.

The Research Section of Publicity has now four secretaries working out accurate facts along general, industrial, foreign and financial lines.

The publicity department has not reached its full efficiency but it has promise of great things for the future.

REPORT OF HOSTESS HOUSE COMMITTEE

When the War Department planned the great training camps it may not have remembered the women of the country in the stress of making the new army of men; or it may have thought that if the Government said, "Let there be no women in connection with the camps" that there would be none.

But every woman knows that, as long as there is a train or a trolley or a motor car to carry them, where the men are, there the women will follow. They must see where their sons are living; if the boys are ill they must get to them, and if they are leaving for overseas they must say goodbye to them.

There was no thought of any need of work inside the camp, and no provisions in the program or in the budget had been made to do any such work; but, no sooner had the first Officers' Training Camp been opened at the Plattsburg Barracks than a new and serious problem presented itself.

And so when the Plattsburg Officers' Training Camp opened, the mothers and sisters and wives and sweethearts arrived by tens and hundreds and thousands and there was no spot where they could meet their boys but the dusty road which ran through the Post.

The Y. W. C. A. was already at work in Plattsburg and when the situation became suddenly acute the Commanding Officer turned to the Association for assistance. The Association had had some practical experience in handling and feeding large crowds, for it had organized and run a Hostess House and Cafeteria at the San Francisco Exposition for the use of all women employed on the fair grounds and the women visitors to the fair, and more recently had managed the cafeteria in connection with the Billy Sunday Tabernacle in New York where thousands of women were fed daily.

A generous gift from one of the members of the War Council provided funds for the project and two weeks from the day that Colonel Wolff staked out the first modest Hostess House, the hostesses were serving chocolate cake baked in the kitchen across the cafeteria counter, and the situation as it appeared on the border two years before became suddenly reversed, for it was no longer the girl who played hostess to the soldier but the soldier who became the host of his mother, wife or sweetheart.

The Hostess House has come to be the only place in the camp where the women can meet the men they come to see, where the women can find rest and refreshment while waiting for the soldier to be "off duty," where the too enthusiastic girl finds a balance and protection, where the anxious mother is given comfort and encouragement, and, not least, where the soldier himself can find a comfortable chair by the fire, a quiet nook to read or write, a woman's welcome from the Hostesses when he has no guest of his own, a dainty supplement to his heavy ration and a touch of home within the camp.

This is what the Hostess House stands for, the bit of home, and every boy finds a different word to express his appreciation of the service it renders. "The only place with a chair with a cushion," the "place where the china will break;" "I wouldn't let my mother or sister come to camp but now the Hostess House is here I've told them to come right away." "The Hostesses are mother and sister and sweetheart all rolled into one, and they're always on the job." And so on and so on.

The house is an information bureau where the Hostesses must know the answers to the most varied and surprising number of questions:

"Can you find my son, I don't know his organization."
"Do you keep marriage licenses?"
"Where can I get rooms for my wife?"
"Can you sew on buttons?"
"How do I get my allotment?"
"Why isn't my husband exempt?"
"What time do the trains go?"
"Can you make my sweater go over my head?"

The Hostess House has been accepted as part of camp life, as essential to the comfort and welfare of the men as any of the organizations primarily for their use only.

There has never been a time in the history of the world when such great bodies of men have been gathered together for intensive military training in a country where there was no war. In the Civil War the untrained troops were marched from the cities to the battle front to be trained in action. Today in England many of the training camps are within sound of the great guns, and in France the men are holding the line but a few miles from where in the schools and camps our men are being drilled and taught. But here there is no sight or sound of war and our men are living in abnormal

conditions in seemingly natural and normal surroundings. Surely everything that can be done to encourage their spirit, to make them feel that their women are cared for and protected, to lighten the staleness of too continuous dwelling on one subject, and above all keep them in as close touch with natural human life as long as and wisely as is possible, must be a true and worthy service that can be rendered to our splendid self-sacrificing men.

**STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF Y. W. C. A.
SPECIAL WAR WORK.**

June 18, 1918.

Workers

- 8 Emergency housing workers.
- 54 Headquarters War Work Council special workers.
- 16 Supervisory workers.
- 196 Hostess House staff (including 9 colored).
- 160 Club Workers (including 18 colored).
- 24 Foreign Community workers.
- 458 Total.

Centers

- 83 Club Centers—with several more authorized to which workers have not been sent.
- 54 Hostess Houses (including three colored houses and four "Metropolitan" houses or rooms—and Plattsburg which is to be opened only for one month.)
- 29 Houses authorized—or under construction—including eight colored and second house at Spartanburg and a new house at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Also six of the requests for Hostess Houses which will probably be granted.
- 6 Requests received will probably be granted for additional Hostess Houses (not listed above).

Respectfully submitted,

Reba Forbes Morse

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